

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 02052 121651Z

43

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 PM-03 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 CAB-02 COME-00 DOTE-00 EB-07

FAA-00 L-02 /065 W

----- 127760

O R 121300Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6859

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 2052

A3.O. 11652: GDS

TAGAMC PFOR, IN, PK

SUBJECT: OVERFLIGHT TALKS MAY BE POSTPONED

1. PRESS STORIES IN FEB 12 NEW DELHI PAPERS REPORT THAT INDIA AND PAKISTAN ARE LIKELY TO RESUME TALKS ON LIFTING THE BAN ON OVERFLIGHTS DURING THE WEEK OF FEB 21 IN NEW DELHI. AN MEA SOURCE TOLD US THIS MORNING, HOWEVER, THAT THERE IS SOME DOUBT AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THESE TALKS WILL TAKE PLACE. HE ADDED THAT HE EXPECTED TO KNOW THE DECISION WITHIN 24 HOURS. SOURCES IN MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION INDEPENDENTLY TOLD US ALSO THIS MORNING THEY ARE STILL PREPARED TO GO AHEAD WITH TALKS AND HAVE NOT BEEN GIVEN SIGNALS THAT THE TALKS MIGHT BE POSTPONED.

2. COMMENT: OF COURSE IT OCCURS TO US THAT PAKISTAN FONSEC AGHA SHAHI MIGHT PREFER NOT TO BE IN DELHI WHILE SOVIET

DEFENSE MINISTER GRECHKO IS HERE NEGOTIATING ON ARMS SALES OR AT THE TIME THE GOI ANNOUNCES AN AGREEMENT WITH SHEIKH ABDULLAH, BOTH SCHEDULED FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING FEB 21. CAN ISLAMABAD PROVIDE ANY FURTHER INFO ON PLANS FOR AIR TALKS AND AT WHOSE INITIATIVE THESE MAY BE DELAYED?
SCHNEIDER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AIRCRAFT OVERFLIGHTS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975NEWDE02052
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750051-0174
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750250/aaaabssy.tel
Line Count: 51
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 1
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 AUG 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <24 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OVERFLIGHT TALKS MAY BE POSTPONED
TAGS: PFOR, IN, PK
To: ISLAMABAD
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006